

IOWA BOARD OF NURSING

In RE: Petition for)	Declaratory Ruling No. 97
)	
Declaratory Ruling Filed By:)	RN Delegation to Certified
Judith D. Smith, RN)	Medication Aides and Certified
and)	Medication Managers, the Admin-
Sheila Sliefert)	istration of Glucagon Injec-
July 20, 1998)	tions to a Client With Severe
)	Hypoglycemia

A petition for declaratory ruling was filed with the Iowa Board of Nursing by Judith D. Smith, R.N. and Sheila Sliefert, Residential Administrator, WESCO Industries, Denison, Iowa, on July 20, 1998.

The Board is authorized to issue declaratory rulings "as to the applicability of any statutory provision, rule, or other written statement of law or policy, decision, or order of the agency" pursuant to 1997 Iowa Code § 17A.9. See also 655 IAC 9.

The board's interpretation of the question is as follows:

May the registered nurse, employed by WESCO Industries, delegate to certified medication managers and certified medication aides the administration of glucagon injections to a client with severe hypoglycemia?

Facts leading to this request are as follows:

Regency Court RCF-MR is located in Denison, Iowa and serves 14 residents who work at WESCO's sheltered workshop. Staff at the group home consist of one licensed practical nurse who works approximately 24 hours per week. Remaining staff members are either certified medication aides or certified medication

managers. WESCO Industries employs a registered nurse who works from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and who is available by telephone to the Regency Court staff during the remaining hours. The physician or one of his physician partners is on call at all times.

The resident for whom this declaratory ruling is being sought is a fifty-one-year-old female who has lived at the facility since July 31, 1989 and is employed by WESCO Industries. She is diagnosed with mild mental retardation and is a type I diabetic. She is capable of administering her own insulin injections. However, she frequently experiences low blood sugar and has required emergency treatment at the hospital approximately six times during the last year. When she becomes hypoglycemic, staff members are able to identify her signs and symptoms and respond appropriately. However, at times, she is able to function very well in the hypoglycemic state and the condition is not recognized until she becomes unconscious.

Additional facts are as follows:

The resident's physician has requested that the staff at the at the group home be allowed to administer emergency glucagon injections. Her parents concur with this request. Intramuscular glucagon is administered to reverse the hypoglycemic state and to prevent further complications.

Regulations for residential care facilities for the mentally retarded are set forth in the Iowa Administrative Code.

In accordance with 481 IAC 63.18(3)"i," "Injectable medications must be issued by a qualified nurse or physician." Staff at WESCO Industries were informed that before the Department of Inspections and Appeals would proceed with the consideration of a variance from 481 IAC 63.18(3)"i," a declaratory ruling must be issued by the board of nursing.

The Iowa Board of Nursing previously considered a similar request. On June 29, 1989, the board voted to allow nonlicensed personnel employed in a residential care facility to administer glucagon by injection to a resident with hypoglycemia. The board required that all personnel administering the medication must be instructed in the proper administration procedures by either a registered nurse or a physician, with documentation that they are authorized to administer this medication. The board also directed that there must be a written order from the resident's physician for the medication.

Rationale:

The Iowa Board of Nursing considers the administration of injectable medication to be a nursing function. The procedure requires the knowledge and skills attributed to nurses. However, in this case, it is in the best interest of the resident to allow the registered nurse to delegate the task to nonlicensed persons who have been provided training and have demonstrated the competency to safely perform the skill. Therefore, the registered nurse employed by WESCO Industries may delegate the

administration of intramuscular glucagon to a certified medication aide or a certified medication manager when:

1. The registered nurse or licensed practical nurse is not present in the facility.
2. There is a written physician's order for the medication.
3. The agency has a written policy indicating that the delegation of the task is permissible under the guidelines herein.
4. The registered nurse provides for the certified medication aides and the certified medication managers, inservice education to include the indications for the medication, proper administration procedure, follow-up care and actions to be taken if the resident does not respond to the treatment.
5. The registered nurse assesses the competency of the certified medication aides and the certified medication managers on a quarterly basis.
6. The registered nurse provides for annual review of the procedure, and documentation thereof is contained in the personnel files of the certified medication aides and of the certified medication managers.

The registered nurse shall retain accountability for the actions that are delegated.

Sandra K Bane
Sandra K. Bane, R.N., B.S.N.
Chairperson
Iowa Board of Nursing

September 3, 1998
Date

Lorinda K Inman
Lorinda K. Inman, R.N., M.S.N.
Executive Director
Iowa Board of Nursing

September 3, 1998
Date